



PRESS RELEASE

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Kitty Hawk Sailors enjoy down-under hospitality

By Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Randy Lane and Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Aaron Roob, Kitty Hawk public affairs

USS KITTY HAWK, At sea– USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63) departed Fremantle, Australia, Aug. 14, ending a four-day visit, which allowed the ship's crew and Sailors from Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5 to enjoy down-under hospitality and give back to the local community.

To celebrate the ship's arrival and reaffirm the strong diplomatic ties between the U.S. and Australia, Kitty Hawk hosted a reception for more than 1,000 Australian guests its first night in port. On the remaining three days of its visit, the Kitty Hawk crew conducted tours for more than 1,600 visitors and participated in a number of community service projects.

To help coordinate tours, Kitty Hawk called upon "The Sandgropers" from the Association of Naval Aviation (ANA), Squadron 55, a group of aviation enthusiasts from the Perth area.

"The ANA volunteers were instrumental in both helping coordinate and execute tours during this port visit," said Lt. Cmdr. Terrance Dudley, Kitty Hawk's public affairs officer. "They spent a lot of their own time and money, in some cases, to ensure tours of the ship went as smoothly as possible."

Sailors looking for entertainment in Perth and Fremantle received a helping hand from Kitty Hawk's Morale, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) division who organized plenty of activities for Sailors interested in experiencing the Australian outback with their shipmates.

More than 1,100 Sailors participated in 52 tours, which centered on the area's many wineries and outdoor activities.

"I enjoyed getting up close and personal with some of Australia's local wildlife," said Yeoman Seaman Jessica Gardner, a participant on MWR's Koalas, Kangaroos and Sharks Tour. "We had the opportunity to pet kangaroos and koalas, as well as hold a wombat."

On MWR's "Adventure Day" tour, Sailors got the chance to ride horses alongside wild kangaroos, canoe down a river, and sandboard in the sand dunes of Lancelin.

"While another group was sandboarding, our tour guides took us for a drive in one of their four-wheel drive vehicles," said Personnel Specialist 3rd Class Andrew Bennett. "I had a blast riding up the really steep sand dunes."

MWR also coordinated the rental of hotel rooms to Kitty Hawk Sailors, contributing more than \$83,000 to Australia's economy through shipboard sales alone.

Approximately 80 Sailors from Kitty Hawk and CVW-5 spent their liberty helping out with eight community service projects.

Some of the volunteers helped plant native seedling trees in Whiteman Park, while others helped clean and maintain the Perth Zoo.

"We painted a barn, set up some fencing and painted a chain-link fence around a giraffe compound," said Aviation Machinist's Mate 1st Class (AW) Jarrod Ishii, one of the 28 Sailors who volunteered their time at the zoo. "The staff was very appreciative and treated us to a nice barbecue lunch. They said we'd saved them about a month's worth of work."

At the Technology Assisting Disability Western Australia Center, Navy volunteers helped set up 27 computer workstations for disabled Australians.

"We cleaned and set up computer terminals and made sure they all had the right components," said Information Systems Technician 1st Class (SW/AW) Patricia Mark, one of the project's volunteers. "It was great to give something back to and visit with our Australian hosts."

The Kitty Hawk Strike Group is the largest carrier strike group in the Navy and is composed of the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk (CV 63), Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 5, the guided-missile cruisers USS Chancellorsville (CG 62) and USS Cowpens (CG 63), and Destroyer Squadron 15.

To find more news about the Kitty Hawk Strike Group, visit the Navy NewsStand at www.news.navy.mil/local/cv63/.